What is claimed is:

1.   A message brokering system for providing a
publish/subscribe service for publisher and subscriber
application programs, comprising:
        means for receiving published messages from one or
more publisher application programs;
        means for forwarding received messages to connected
message brokering systems;
        means, responsive to a communication characteristic
of an inter-broker communication link between the message
brokering system and one of said connected message
brokering systems, for selecting a message filtering
policy which is appropriate for the communication
characteristic; and
        means for controlling the forwarding of messages via
the inter-broker communication link using the selected
message filtering policy.

2.   A message brokering system according to claim 1,
wherein the communication characteristic used to select a
message filtering policy is a communication protocol
provided by the communication link.

3.   A message brokering system according to claim 1,
wherein establishing an inter-broker communication link
includes:
        defining the communication characteristic for the
link;

comparing the communication characteristic with a
list of administrator-defined associations between
communication characteristics and message filtering
policies, to select a message filtering policy for the
communication link; and

storing an identification of the selected message
filtering policy in association with the communication
link.

4.   A message brokering system according to claim 1,
wherein the communication characteristic used to select a
message filtering policy includes a dynamic communication
characteristic.

5.   A message brokering system according to claim 4,
wherein the communication characteristic used to select a
message filtering policy includes a measure of
subscription activity.

6.   A message brokering system according to claim 4,
wherein the communication characteristic used to select a
message filtering policy includes a measure of redundant
message transmissions.

7.   A message brokering system according to claim 1,
wherein the means for controlling includes means for
implementing a broadcast messaging policy and means for
implementing a proxy-subscription-based message filtering
policy, a respective one of said means for implementing

being activated in response to said selection of a
message filtering policy.

8.   A message brokering system according to claim 7,
wherein said means for implementing a
proxy-subscription-based messaging policy comprises:
        means for receiving subscription information for
connected message brokering systems and for storing said
subscription information for comparison with received
published messages;
        means for forwarding to connected message brokering
systems subscription information for subscriber
application programs connected to the message brokering
system.

9.   A message brokering system according to claim 7,
wherein the broadcast messaging policy is implemented for
links which provide a non-transactional messaging
protocol and the proxy-subscription-based message
filtering policy is implemented for links which provide a
transactional messaging protocol.

10.   A message brokering system according to claim 1,
wherein the selection of a message filtering policy is
specific to a selected message topic or topic group.

11.   A data processing system comprising:
        at least a first and a second message broker,
connected via one or more inter-broker communication
links and configured to provide a publish/subscribe

service for publisher and subscriber application
programs;

     means, responsive to a communication characteristic
of a communication link between the first and second
message brokers, for selecting a message filtering policy
which is appropriate for the communication
characteristic; and

     means for controlling the transmission of messages
via the inter-broker communication link using the
selected message filtering policy.

12.   A data processing system according to claim 11,
wherein said means for selecting a message filtering
policy is adapted to select one of a plurality of
different policies in response to characteristics of a
received message.

13.   A data processing system according to claim 12,
wherein the means for selecting a message filtering
policy is adapted to select one of a plurality of
different policies in response to a topic identifier
within a received message.

14.   A computer program product for providing a
publish/subscribe brokering service for publisher and
subscriber application programs, comprising program code
recorded on a machine-readable recording medium, the
program code comprising:

     means for receiving published messages from one or
more publisher application programs;

means for forwarding received messages to connected message brokering systems;

means, responsive to a communication characteristic of an inter-broker communication link between the message brokering system and one of said connected message brokering systems, for selecting a message filtering policy which is appropriate for the communication characteristic; and

means for controlling the forwarding of messages via the inter-broker communication link using the selected message filtering policy.

15.   A method of communication in a publish/subscribe environment in which publisher application programs send messages to subscriber application programs via message brokers. The brokers are able to send messages to each other using a number of different communication protocols and to apply different filtering policies. The method comprises:

storing a definition of a message filtering policy for inter-broker communications for each of said communication protocols, the filtering policy either specifying no filtering or specifying a filtering rule;

responsive to receipt of a published message at a first message broker, referring to characteristics of the received message to determine an appropriate inter-broker communication protocol;

selecting the determined protocol and, if the selected protocol's stored message filtering policy

requires application of a filtering rule, applying the
filtering rule to the message; and

    transmitting the message to a second broker using
the selected communication protocol only if transmission
is consistent with the filtering rule.

16. A method of configuring a message brokering system
for efficient inter-broker communications in a
multi-broker publish/subscribe environment in which
publishers publish messages via message brokers and
subscribers register with message brokers to receive
published messages, the method comprising:

    responsive to a communication characteristic for a
communication link between the message brokering system
and another message brokering system, selecting a message
filtering policy according to the determined
communication characteristic; and

    controlling the transmission of messages via the
communication link using the selected message filtering
policy.